want of clearance by the Union Government;

(b) the cost of escalations on account of the delay;

(c) the reasons for delay in clearance; and

(d) the steps proposed to give early clearance to the projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI): (a), (c) and (d) Statement in respect of Projects of West Bengal pending clearance as in January, 1988 in respect of projects of Ministry of Agriculture and as of August-October, 1987 in respect of others is placed on the Table of the House. [*See* Appendix CXLV, Annexure No. 86].

(b) Escalation in the cost of projects is caused by multiplicity of factors which operate s multaneously. Hence it may not be possible to isolate the impact of the delay in the clearance of projects on the cost of the projects.

**Vacant seats in the State Legislative Assemblies**

2329. SHRI NARAYAN KAR: Will the Minister of LAW and JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) number and names of seats lying vacant in the different State Legislative Assembly, State-wise details thereof;

(b) since when these seats are lying vacant and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to fill up these seats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) A statement containing the required information is laid on the Table of the House. (*See* below).

(c) The Election Commission has ordered a summary revision of the electoral rolls for various Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies, including those constituencies which are vacant, with reference to 1-1-88 as the qualifying date. The final rolls are likely to be published by the end of March, 1988. Only thereafter, it will be possible for the Election Commission to work out a programme of election.

**Statement**

**ASSEMBLY SEATS**

| State | No. and Name of the constituency | Date of occurrance of vacancies | Cause of Vacancy |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. Assam | 22—Salmara South | 15-12-87 | Election declared void |
| 2. Bihar | 295—Chaibassa | 9-12-87 | Void. Election declared void by the High Court whether Appeal is filed in Supreme Court is not Known. |
| | 324—Hussainabad | 13-12-87 | Death Election petition pending. |
| | 70—Sonbarsa | 17-2-88 | Death |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *3. Gujarat | 41—Malia | 1.1.88 | Death |
| 4. Madhya Pradesh | 9—Gohad (SC) | 18.7 87 | Death |
| | 16—Lashkar East | 2.6.87 | Death |
| | 274—Indore—V | 25 2 87 | Resignation. Election petition pending. |
| | 104—Kharsia | 22.2.88 | Resignation |
| 5. Rajasthan | 25—Khetri | 22.5.87 | Death |
| 6. Tripura | 51—Fatikrey | Counter-manded | |
| 7. Uttar Pradesh | 133—Tanda | 13.1.87 | Death |
| | 403—Chaprauli | 25.10.87 | Death |
| 8. West Bengal | 10—Kumargram | 4.12.87 | Death |
| | 258—Barabani | 14.12.87 | Death |
| 9. Pondicherry | 25—Neraby-Grand Aldee | 9.11.87 | Death |

NOTE :—As per press reports the seat from 31-Dwarka in Gujarat has also allegedly fallen vacant due to the death of the sitting candidate. The Election Commission is, however yet to receive an official confirmation.

**People Living below the Poverty Line**

2330. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of people living below the poverty line in the country, the State-wise details thereof, and

(b) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to improve their economic condition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI): (a) According to latest estimates of persons living below poverty line for the year 1983-84, which are based on the 38th round of National Sample Survey Organisation on Household Consumer Expenditure, 2710.0 lakhs persons were below the poverty line in the country. A statement indicating the State-wise number of persons below poverty line in 1983-84 is enclosed (*See* Appendix CXLV, Annexure No. 87].

(b) Removal of poverty remains the central concern of planning in India. While the planned development of the economy helps in improving job opportunities, income levels and living conditions of all sections of society, policies and programmes, in addition, have been devised to directly attack the problem of poverty. Accordingly, the Sixth Five Year Plan had set out a two pronged strategy to deal with the problem of poverty. Emphasis was laid on accelerating the pace of agricultural development with the hope that it would have a beneficial effect on raising standard of living of the poorer sections of the society. On the other hand it was decided to strengthen and expand the scope of beneficiary oriented anti-poverty programmes in rural areas. Consistent with this approach the Seventh Plan lays emphasis on accelerated agricultural growth, incraesed proudctivity of rice in Eastern region, developing the potential of